

North Carolina Textbook Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 19, 2021

1:00 - 3:00pm

Virtual Only

Members Present: Lora Austin, Jodi Rae Autry, Meghan Canady, Edward Coggins, Angela Flowers, Aubrey Godette, Dawn Hester, Hannah Jimenez, Kathleen Linker, Amy Marshall, Susan Mills, Dunyil Morris, Stephen Parker, Kim Robertson, Lindsey Sise

Members Absent: Kelly Browning, William Chesher, Hannah Cook, Renee Kimball, Michelle Perry, Nardi Routten, Rosalyn Yarus.

Others Present: Dr. Carmella Fair

Call to Order and Welcome: Commissioner Linker welcomed the Commissioners and called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Commissioner Linker asked Dr. Fair to do the roll call.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Linker entertained a motion for the approval of minutes from April. Commissioner Jimenez made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Coggins made a second to the motion. She asked Dr. Fair to do a roll call for the approval of the minutes. All Commissioners present agreed to approve the minutes.

Meeting Norms: Commissioner Linker went over meeting norms. She mentioned that virtual is the new normal and that for commission meetings, virtual used to be an option. The four expectations are 1) Be Ready – assure that all of your equipment is working properly. 2) Mute yourself if you are not talking to avoid any background noise. 3) Be present - avoid text and emails while attending the meeting, and 4) Participate – participating virtually is different because it means that you have to ask questions at some point for documentation that you are present and to establish quorum as a public hearing and to follow Roberts Rules of Conduct. When you speak, be sure to identify yourself. It is important to

comment and ask questions because oral participation is imperative since they are not visual and not able to be seen.

Subcommittee Update: Since the last commission meeting, the Subcommittee for Digital Resources has been meeting during that time. Specifically, to discuss two Canvas courses, one for the Textbook Commissioners and one for the advisors when they get to that point in the process. They will discuss an update on the commissioners' Canvas course. Commissioners Jimenez and Sise have spearheaded that course and will give a presentation. Then there will be a discussion about what that means for the Commissioners.

Commissioner Sise began the presentation with the home page, the Evaluation Training for the Commissioners. She explained that you can either click the buttons at the bottom or click on the modules to access any area. The next page is the "Essential Information", this page is specific to the role as a Commissioner. When you click on the page it will have some rules and regulations as a Commissioner you will need to know by law. The operations manual is a pdf that you can print out. The State Board of Education policy will take you to the DPI website that has the board policies specific to Commissioners. The tentative meeting schedule meaning it will be updated as things change. It opens to a live word document. The attendance policy explains quorum and what is needed to meet quorum. It will also open as a pdf. The Invitation opens as a pdf and it is the invitation sent out to the publishers and it is given to the Commissioners so they will know what is asked of the publishers. The textbook adoption web page is set up on the DPI website. The next page is the Essential Information Sign Off page that you will sign off on to verify that you have read and understand the Essential Information page.

The next module is "Digital Systems". Earlier this week Dr. Fair emailed you the 2021 Commissioner folder. There is a clip that you can click on that will walk you through how to add the folder to your personal Google drive because you will be using this folder every meeting. The virtual meetings best practices opens to a pdf. Please read because the commission will probably be in virtual meetings for a while. The next page is the sign off on that you have read and understand the digital system page. Commissioner Linker also said that she emailed the information to everyone yesterday as well.

The next module "Before Evaluation Week" is very important for new commissioners. Commissioners Sise and Jimenez got together and made a list of

what information would have been helpful for commissioners to know. Receiving materials and taking inventory of the materials is important. Commissioner Sise mentioned commissioners need to have somewhere to store the materials for a long time (e.g., garage, college storage) that is easily accessible. Commissioners will have to look at the materials regularly. Black out information is included because there are specific guidelines about communication with publishers. There will be more information on black out period throughout.

The next module is “During Evaluation Week”. The first thing Commissioners must do is make sure the publishers are set up and the second is to make sure that all of the evaluators are evaluating what they are supposed to be evaluating. Commissioner Jimenez and Sise came up with a document to keep up with each advisor and make sure they were reviewing the books that needed to be done. The template is shared in the module.

There are some troubleshooting tips (in the module). Most of the problems were common technical issues with publisher devices. The Commissioners can walk through resolving the problem. Commissioners will look at the devices before the advisors come. If they are not able to resolve, Commissioner Linker is the go-to person.

Commissioners should have some note-taking strategies because at the end of the process those notes will become very valuable. There is a screenshot of a table with information provided by the advisors. In the end, the list was a good collection of pros and cons. Also, review the notes at the bottom of the pages because they will have information that will be very helpful.

The next module “After Evaluation Week” discusses the next course of action. Commissioners will take a day to meet and review their notes and discuss who will be recommended or who will not be recommended. This is after evaluation week. The next page is the signoff page to verify that you have read and understand.

The next module is the “Deliberations and Reconsiderations”. This is where notetaking is important. The deliberations and reconsiderations evaluation process will take place about one month after evaluation week. This is when you will vote yea or nay and you have to explain the reason for your vote. The publisher may ask you for specifics, and you should be able to reference your notes and explain

why you voted a certain way and say these are the reasons we as a commission feel that this publication is not valuable to our students.

Deliberation best practices: As Commissioner Linker stated being present and an active participant is important. During the deliberation process, don't keep repeating something someone else said even if you word it differently. This is about being present and knowing what you are going to talk about. It is a very lengthy process.

Reconsiderations: If there is a publisher that needs to be reconsidered, they must meet with commissioners and give their presentation again. Commissioners must take notes and have information to back up decisions, even if they decide yes.

The "Deliberations Sign Off" page is to verify that you completed the section and have read and understand the information.

The deliberations page is the end. This is a quick synopsis. They (Commissioner Sise and Jimenez) wanted you to know that everything has a toggle, and each page will open as a pdf or website. If it is a pdf, save to your device and make subfolders for easy access.

Commissioner Sise asked Commissioner Jimenez if there was anything else to review? Commissioner Jimenez said that within the Canvas course she set up some prerequisites and requirements, so you won't be able to jump around or access the next page until you complete the page that you are on. She also said that the movement and flow may change a little after they edit, but basically it will look the same.

Commissioner Marshall asked how to access the Canvas course? Commissioner Sise replied that once it goes live Dr. Fair will add everyone to the course. Dr. Fair will give you more information on when to access it and a due date for when everything should be completed.

Commissioner Linker said as a follow-up to the last question, that an email will go out. If commissioners are already a school system employee, you probably have an I.M. account and when you are invited you will see the Canvas course for the State, for DPI in your I.M. account when you login. If you're not a school system employee, you will be receiving information on that because you will have to be added.

Commissioner Linker said the expectations for the course is that every Commissioner, including the ones who worked on it will need to complete the course before they meet next. Commissioners will talk about that at the end of the meeting. Commissioner Linker is shooting for February, 4-5 weeks from now.

Commissioner Linker mentioned trying to get back on pace where the commission would be on the cycle. Much of the training had already been received last year as a commission: the content training and the first meeting for the ethics training. Commissioners saw the Invitation, they looked at the criteria sheets and then everything stopped. Commissioners will not go back and repeat what was done in the three meetings from last year. Commissioners are still in the same cycle and have the same content to evaluate.

The commission is trying to prepare so that when the cycle begins, commissioners will be ready and not have to scramble to find advisors and other parts of the pieces commissioners didn't get to when it stopped. Commissioner Linker asked if there were any questions? As commissioners go through the course if there are any questions, or if commissioners are not sure about remembering because it has been a year, at the next meeting, it can be arranged to have the attorney present if there are questions about ethics and blackouts, the legality part. The content people can come back if you have questions about the content or the criteria sheets. All of that is in the Invitation. The hope is that the Canvas course will help everyone to get back into the game and the information that has been shared will help to continue the process.

Commissioners will look at evaluating the CTE courses and the Math 1, 2, 3 and 4, Discrete Math, it's six math courses. Commissioners will not evaluate Social Studies because those standards are being revised. A few courses were added back to CTE from what was originally planned. There are additional courses but it's still a majority of the CTE courses. It's a huge catalog of courses that are offered in various programs. Commissioner Linker asked if there were any questions or concerns?

Commissioner Morris asked Commissioner Linker to repeat the courses that they will be evaluating. Commissioner Linker said they are all in the Invitation, but she knows that for Math it's High School courses, Math 1, 2, 3, and 4, Discrete Math and another one, but Commissioner Linker could not remember. Commissioner Linker said that there are a lot of CTE courses. The courses should be spelled out in the Invitation or there are criteria sheets for those. If not, Commissioner Linker

can send Commissioner Morris a list. Commissioner Linker can send everybody a list. Commissioner Linker asked Dr. Fair if she could make a note to send out a list of the courses. Dr. Fair said she would encourage the Commissioners to go to the Textbook Adoption website because the Invitation as well as a pull-out list of courses from the Invitation are located there as well as the updated schedule for adoption, so commissioners will be able to see where we are as far as the schedule of adoption in the coming years as well. Commissioner Linker added that there is a link if you go to ncpublicschools.org and google textbook adoption, on the homepage on the right-hand side a dark navy-blue bar and textbook adoption process is one of the options. When you are on that page scroll down and you will see the CTE criteria sheets and the 9-12 criteria sheets.

Commissioners' Role and Expectations: Commissioner Linker went over the commissioner's roles and expectations which are spelled out in the Statutes. Commissioner Linker reviewed *G.S. 115C-88 Commission to evaluate all textbooks offered for adoption.*

G.S. 115C-88. Commission to evaluate textbooks offered for adoption

a) The Commission shall evaluate all textbooks offered for adoption. – Each proposed textbook shall be read by at least one expert certified in the discipline for which the textbook would be used. The Commission may use external experts if no Commission member or advisory committee member qualifies as an expert certified in a particular discipline. The Commission may consider any review of a proposed textbook by other experts certified in the discipline who are not involved in the textbook adoption process. However, these reviews may not substitute for the direct examination of the proposed textbook by a Commission member, an advisory committee member, or any other expert retained by the Commission.

(b) Each member shall examine carefully and file a written evaluation of each proposed textbook for which the member is responsible. The evaluation report shall give special consideration to the suitability of the textbook to the instructional level for which it is offered, the content or subject matter, whether the textbook is aligned with the Standard Course of Study, and other criteria prescribed by the Board. Each evaluation report shall be signed by the member making the report and filed with the Board not later than a day fixed by the Board when the call for adoption is made.

Commissioner Linker provided a review for both sections. The charge for every commissioner is to evaluate every textbook offered for adoption. Commissioner Linker noted that regarding section (a) it means commissioners will evaluate. Commissioners can have experts, but it is ultimately the commissioners' review. The reviews from experts does not substitute their review. That is why commissioners have access to materials because they must go through the material with the criteria sheets themselves.

This process starts as soon as commissioners have access to the material. Evaluation week is a month later, so commissioners will have a month to review the material. After that, the advisors come in and use the same criteria sheets and they dig in. The advisors are certified for the discipline they are evaluating. Then commissioners look at the reviews, but it is ultimately the commissioners' decision. Commissioner Linker asked if there were any questions?

Commissioner Linker explained she highlighted the first line of section (b) *Each member shall examine carefully and file a written evaluation of each proposed textbook for which the member is responsible.*

Commissioner Linker said commissioners are responsible for everything. For everything submitted, every commission member will carefully examine and file a written evaluation of that proposed textbook. Part of the process of evaluation is commissioners get materials and start going through them and then the advisors comb through during evaluation week and commissioners debrief the advisors and get their opinion and they leave. Then commissioners have 2-3 weeks before reconvening as a commission for deliberation. Commissioners come in with pros and cons and talk about what was found to be strong, what we didn't find, what it's lacking and then vote if it meets the criteria. All that is laid out in the criteria sheet. That is the deliberation. Reconsideration occurs if the commission does not recommend a submission. The publisher can ask the commission to reconsider and they provide additional information based on the comments that they hear as commission is deliberating. The publisher can come back and show the commission where they think the information is and the commission will vote again. Commissioners will type in a form that is in a digital platform. Commissioners type in strengths and weaknesses. Everything is compiled into a huge digital report that is sent to the Board of Education along with recommendations whether to approve or not to approve. The Board of Education makes their decision based on the information that commissioners send.

There was a feeling that there is a need to go back over the report because they received feedback from the new commissioners that they really didn't know what it was until it was time to complete it. Commissioner Linker felt the best way would be to show examples from reports that were submitted that were part of the ELA Adoption. The report is 1,000 pages almost because every commission member, there are 23, put information in cells. When writing the report only one submission at a time can be seen.

Under the first column "strengths", in the second column weakness or things you would like to have seen and overall feel for it. The programmers have it so this gets dumped into the final report. In the first example you'll see, some people type more generic comments specific to the submission and some enter standards that are strong are weak. It depends on your writing purpose if you are more holistic or to the points. Each dash is a specific point the commission member was trying to make. Here they talk about the number one thing, if it meets 80% of the Standard Course of Study. They make comments if it did or didn't and any other strong pieces from the sections of the criteria sheet that was well done and strong. The second column, there is a specific standard, R.I.5.7. That particular one was weak. The commission member chose to not just say what the standard is but to label the standard. Everything may not be based on a standard, but other strengths and weaknesses based on other sections of the criteria sheet, such as pedagogy and technology. Does it meet the needs of EL (English Learner) and EC (Exceptional Children) students? Is it handicap accessible? There are different parts of the criteria sheet, not just the standard course of study.

In the right column, the general overall comments section is based on the commission members writing style. In the example, the commissioner put general points for overall comments. All the information is gathered from the commissioner's input, advisors and deliberations. Each commission member has a strength and a weakness. There are two commission members who teach CTE and they will be a resource to ask what the standard means.

There is something in every column. Think of it from a teacher's perspective, you want to enter two good things and one thing to work on. Commissioners are not just recommending or not recommending the material, hopefully publishers are using this information to provide instructional material that meets needs in the future. Positive comments can be made, but there may be something that needs

work, something else you would have liked to see incorporated. That information is important for the publishers.

In the next example, there are not that many negatives because the commissioner felt it was really strong. Sometimes you might see some general information. For instance, a K-2 and K-5 may have strengths that are the same throughout. It might be a series that they are submitting such as writing and each had guided reading groups. If so, it is okay to say the same thing for every grade level if that is the case.

The next one is different and the commissioner had a different writing style. The same basic information is given. Commissioner Linker stated she wanted to use different examples so commissioners could see the different styles. In this example, there are strengths and weaknesses. This example is more holistic. There are not many specific standards listed but in the end the commission member pointed out one standard that was weak or missing. There are comments about EC and EL. Commissioners look through this lens to see if the materials meet the needs of diverse students as well as the accelerated group.

In the next format, it has a lot in overall. Commissioner Linker noted that she uses her overall for the overall areas: section a, b, c, and d on the criteria sheet, she makes a comment for each area and the strengths and weaknesses. The key point is to take notes and use the criteria sheets. The big thing is to make sure there are comments, strengths, weaknesses, and overall comments. Commissioners don't need to have a report with blank columns and blank cells. The charge as a commissioner is to complete a report. There should be some comments for everything. Sometimes a publisher may package digitally, and the exact same material is a printed option or a combination of print and digital. In those cases, you might see "refer to the comparable number" as a way not to duplicate but in other cases have a strong, weak, and comments. The more information we can provide the publisher the better it helps the process. It also provides information to districts because the report is public record, and they can look at it and say the Textbook Commission recommended this one but what did they really think of this one versus this one. It allows districts to look deeper when they are trying to select material.

Commissioner Autry had a question regarding this adoption cycle. She was looking at the Invitation and she knows that they are doing the CTE areas, there are 7 program areas listed under the CTE and the Agriculture section has 18

courses listed. Will they need to review each of the 18 courses or are they looking at Agriculture education as a whole? Commissioner Linker said commissioners would need to review each course, however many are submitted. Commissioner Autry said she knows from years past they don't know how many there will be until they are all submitted. Commissioner Linker mentioned it has been a while since CTE has been adopted but in the past although there were a lot of courses, there were a lot of people to evaluate the different courses but there were not a lot of submissions for each one. Commissioner Linker emphasized that commissioners would review each course submitted but it may not be as much as they think.

Commissioner Coggins mentioned that last year the State Board of Education postponed the adoption process indefinitely. He asked if they are moving forward. He wanted to know if there has been an update from the State Board of Education regarding moving forward for the 2021 adoption process. Commissioner Linker said that the commission asked (the SBE) for the process to be stopped or to be put on hold because of the pandemic and not being able to meet face to face. It wasn't stopped, it was put on hold. The hope is to resume on cycle before the end of this fiscal year, which is July 1st. It would just be the areas scheduled for 2020. Nothing new was added, the only change is the dates. The only thing they would have to do is ask the Board of Education to resume and approve the tentative dates. Commissioner Linker hopes to have more information at the February meeting.

Commissioner Linker stated ultimately this was an opportunity to see what the report looks like and the expectation. Filing the report is a requirement when the position on the commission is accepted. There are some commissioners who have not gone through the evaluation process at all. Just pace yourself and remember the reports must be submitted before leaving the last meeting. Once it is submitted, you can't change it. There is a three- to four-week turnaround time for programmers to print reports for the SBE. The report is public record. The process has improved. The criteria sheet used to be legal size front and back and commissioners used paper and pencil. Having it digital makes it a lot smoother than in the past. This was an opportunity for commissioners to see what a report looks like. The platform provides the official document that merges into the final document. There is a place for commissioners to take notes. At the last session, commissioners were not yet able to access the platform but there will be an opportunity to look at it. Everyone works with the same framework but what

everyone puts in varies from person to person. Commissioner Linker told members new to the process to reach out to others who will be glad to talk about it and explain things. Commissioner Linker shared there is a lot that goes into providing reports because everyone wants the best quality and to meet the needs of the students and teachers statewide. Commissioners select advisors from across the state, so everyone has input in the process.

Questions/Comments: None.

Next Steps: Dr. Fair will send out information on how to get into the Canvas course. Everyone should complete the course before next meeting. After this meeting, Dr. Fair will send out a poll with dates and time choices for the next meeting.

If you have any questions regarding the training or Canvas course, let Dr. Fair or Commissioner Linker know before the next meeting so they can address the questions at the meeting. Commissioners had the opportunity to provide feedback on the criteria sheets. Consultants from DPI can go over the criteria sheet. Review the Invitation or the DPI site for reference before the next meeting. Once they get a go ahead for evaluation, commissioners will move forward. If commissioners know something by the next meeting, it can be discussed if not then by March. CTE will be different from ELA and math. Every region won't get an advisor for every area. Commissioners can use the opportunity to be sure everyone understands and can be prepared to move. CTE has not had an evaluation in a long time and there have been many changes. Go through the course you can ask questions. Look for email from Dr. Fair for email about the course. Look for the Google poll for dates and times. The commission has to have quorum to meet. Twelve is needed for a quorum.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:14 p.m. Commissioner Sise made the motion for the meeting to be adjourned. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. Dr. Fair did the roll call and everyone in attendance agreed to adjourn the meeting.

Minutes taken by: Audrey M. Long

Date of Approval:

DRAFT